

Welcome to the new print companion to MiPoesias Magazine, OCHO.



John Korn works in a second-hand store in Pittsburgh. He is a regular at www.the-hold.com and also on MiPO.

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Tom Blessing has been writing and editing since the early 80's. At this time he is living in Michigan's Upper Peninsula where he has a writing and art studio in the historic Vertin Building in Calumet.

Helm Filipowitsch lives in Canada.

Jenni Russell lives in North Carolina.
Jack Anders lives in North Carolina.

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Amy King is the managing editor for MiPoesias Magazine.

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WARNING WARNING WILL ROBINSON:

The Surgeon General has determined that reading OCHO is not dangerous to your health unless you are also happening to be smoking a cigarette or a Cuban cigar.

Whichever the case may be.

Didi Menendez publishes it.

www.mipoesias.com

Yard Sale

john korn

A young man, Frank, was driving home from work.
He saw a sign for a yard sale, and decided to follow it.
It led him to more signs and he followed those.
Until he got to a small house with a large front lawn.
There was nothing in the yard, except an old man
sitting in a chair with a cardboard box at his feet.
Frank got out of his car and went over to him.
One of the man's eyes was missing and he had a patch over it.
Also, one of his ears were missing.
Frank asked the old man what he was selling.
The man said parts of his body.
And that he had a part for just about anyone.
Frank asked him who he sold his eye and ear to.
The old man said to some city woman, she had
been obsessed with Jim Morrison
And the old man had seen Jim sing the night when he
supposedly whipped his dick out and waved it at the crowd
So she gave him \$500 for one eye, and \$500 for an ear.
Frank said that he wasn't interested in anything, but then
The old man held up his left hand, and said that when he was
Younger, he used to be Marilyn Monroe's hair dresser, and
That he had worked on some movies with her
And that in one movie, she had been nervous, because she
Had this big dramatic scene coming up, and she didn't feel
She was talented enough to handle it, so she asked him to relax her
"This hand fingered Marilyn Monroe, son." The old man said.
"I never washed it, and her juices were like magic, the scent is stained into the flesh."
Frank paid \$1000 for the hand. The old man used a hand saw, and
carved it off at the wrist. He had jars of formaldehyde in the box,
and he put the hand in one and gave it to Frank.
Frank keeps the Jar above his bed, on a mantle, with a light behind it that makes it glow.
The hand gives him dreams of Marilyn standing over a steaming
sewer grate in some shitty place that was never in any movie
the steam blows her dress up, but she never holds it down
She lets it go over her head, over and over and over again.

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before

Pris Campbell

Before Big Mama died, before
she forgot her daughter's name-
my weeping cousin with eyes
dark as caves, before she forgot
her dearest Big Papa, forgot
how to dip her hands deep into
flour and lard to make her
pineapple upside-down pound cake,
before she forgot how kisses fierce
as a cyclone's roar used to feel
and before her glass angels
flew off with her best lamps,
sofa, four poster bed, and her Bible,
Big Mama had her vision.
Her seventeen year old grandson;
hair fallen out from chemo, leg
taken earlier by cancer, skin
thin as parchment on his dying bed,
tubes now draining his life more
than giving; her Michael, son
of my dark-eyed weeping cousin, rose
from his bed, walked to her house
in the night, whole again, and kissed her.
He kissed her then slid through a space
filled with yellow and gold sparkling lights
to kiss his dark-eyed weeping mother,
and they joined hands together in a circle,
the kind of circle that can never be broken.
Not even when bodies and minds fail.

You Call Yourself a Poet?

Helm Filipowitsch

well no I never have/I call myself
a blister leaking words/the keeper
of the kettle/stirring/the telekinetic monk of mood
drooling laughter and pain down my sleeve
which mysteriously becomes/a road pooled
on the fine knife cut between your smile
and the croissant you consume with coffee/urban
legends/a nickel of news/ten unwashed shirts/
twenty bills/a psychotic cat/the sound of robins
flirting with the sky/but poet/no not that life/
not that ripple across vocabulary

That Poem

john korn

I wish I had that poem
the one I almost wrote in the hall
the one that was like some fat fish
all red and purple muscle with big O mouth
gasping on wet rock with slated gills and thick white lips
the one that made her smooth out her ratty hair
with limp warm hands
that I locked fingers with in a car
the one like a leech bloated on thigh meat
I wish I had that poem
the one like a patch of green zucchini busting up
through a gray sidewalk with it's vines and leaves
coiled around a red fire hydrant
the one that called on Saturday morning
and spoke like some old mouth from far away
the one that stared like a barn owl and waited
the one that made her smooth out her skirt
with limp warm skinless hands
the one that turned into three white hairs
above my left ear

Suicides

Jack Anders

I feel them inside of me
and understand them much better
than when I was young.

My aunt, with short dark hair, who sits
deep in the woods
in back of her prim and proper
New England house,
she sits by the side
of a very small stream
with her bottle of vodka.

My father's father, the windshield
wipers clicking, he's driving his sedan
up toward the river bridge.

My other aunt, I see her there
sitting in that silent white light
of tiled bathrooms, with her pill,
a primitive antidepressant of the sixties.

I see flowers
now, little marigolds,
pansies, stiffly in a winter
breeze, they wave, gello, goodbye . . .

Easter

Jenni Russell

I wear a lot of tank tops
stained with sun tea and spicy tanning oil.
But today the heat only promises.
Cold showers are a saving grace
but the afternoon only promises.
Perfect for a jog, for the wilting odor of lilacs
mingling with white blossoms bursting
from last month's empty dogwoods
lining the road behind the convalescent center.
A woman in a wheelchair and a man on a walker
wave their cigarettes at me like flares,
Happy Easter! They smile. I smile back.
It's one of those days when the smile comes easy,
and my legs are like train wheels, or maybe
the air is the wheel and my legs the pistons?
Either way my heart is pure engine,
my lungs warm and made of strange metal
as I push past against future on the gravel path,
counting as I go the white globes of dandelion seeds
nodding like the heads of content brides,
or happy poets at their writing desks
who love to read their own words over and over
—you know who you are. And why not?
Helpless and terrified exist in each one of us,
pride and arrogance do too. My husband, daughter,
I think of them at home. Not a day goes by. . .
yet each one does. They all do.

The Ones I Remember Most

my manager called gimps and me a gimp-
loving stripper for pitying them.
Some limped, had lame or phantom limbs,
carried canes or crutches,
they whistled from wheelchairs,
trekked in on walkers, others spoke
by stopping a hole in their throat with a finger.
They lingered against mirrors each Friday night, waiting
for me to finish my dance with one
and they'd pay me again.
Our forms met in darkness without knowing.
I grinded them to soft places:
curves, velvet waves rippling across the moon.
Sometimes I'd open my eyes
and their eyes would be closed.

Save some Flowers for the Bees

I ask my daughter:

What color is happy?

Green.

What color is sad?

White.

She stoops to pluck

the last dandelions of the year.

Waves of yellow leaves have fallen all around us.

She rakes them with her fingers,

stopping if she feels a soft puff.

I say, save some flowers for the bees.

What color is love?

Yellow.

What color is hope?

Black.



Fizz

Little harmless daydreams
That's how it begins
Little nothings, laugh them off,
Think morbid
Morbid morbid

Little morbid nothings,
Silver blooded alicorns
Call them what you like
When you won't call anyone

Brain full of stingers
Pinch and tweeze
Pat dry with cold cloth
Little harmless bubbles,
Rainbow pop

Little nothings bring props:
Ropes, pistols, bombs, pills,
Big bottles of clear liquor
Car engines purring all night
Let's party, party, party

Little carbonated moon wishes
Tiara crystal beauties
All powder blue glossy
All buried like precious stones

Woman's Work

I never saw my mother seated at the table
closest to the door as I tore off my bikini top
and dropped my g-string insouciantly by the pole.
It wasn't until years later she asked casually over coffee
as one might ask to pass the cream or sugar.

Alone by the door
afraid of being recognized, of what those burns
and twelve hour shifts in a car factory
had taught her about a woman's work...

She can't listen to that song now
without a lesion reopening, the whoops oozing out,
the arms wagging fluorescent dollar bills.

I stare at her bare arms,
arms she covers in summer with long sleeves,
arms she reflexively slips into a sweater
if the door bell rings.

The last burn is scabbing over—
A flurry of hot metal flashes out
of the diecast machine, a speck of light
embedding itself among scars,
sickled and banded like larvae,
legacy, lives without aim.

Didn't you, didn't you ever feel . . .

Ashamed?
Sometimes, but never
scarred—proud sometimes, sometimes
I felt proud.

a different memorial day

ron androla

Most Memorial days
I'd stand over my father's
grave outside of Ellwood
City — just to say hey
in a solemn way. 100
mile drive back up north
with my mind flashing
his existence. He was a
Marine during the Korean
war, served on the U.S.S.
Coral Sea, but I don't
think he saw battle.
I remember his good friend
Ray, decades upon decades ago,
told us about his battleship
sinking, and how he tread
in ocean water for hours &
hours, the dead floating
by him. I never wanted to
be in the service,
especially as my generation
was burning draft-cards
and seemed absolutely correct.
I didn't believe I could kill
another human life. now,
well,
I could;
I wldn't like it,
but if prompted,
I would.
I had to work Memorial
day. I imagine my father's
grave, where the local
vfw has placed a small
Amerikan flag.
My dad is rotted
under there.

The Man With Mice

john korn

It happens when Jack wakes up
at 2:45 am with the pillow on the
floor and the blanket balled up into
the small of his back. And his mind
feels like a strip of glowing red steel
being pounded into a six inch blade.

So, he rolls out of bed and throws on some
clothes. He's nervous and shaking and he hates
himself for putting it off for so long.

He sneaks out the back door of his own house.
Climbs into his car and doesn't turn on
the headlights until he hits the highway.

It's just road and black-purple sky now. And he
can feel them in his stomach, clawing, biting and
shifting inside there.

He takes a back road to someplace, his place,
some landfill next to a pond with dead fish.

He sits on a rusty old refrigerator,
sticks his head between his knees and heaves.
The mice bulge up in his throat and stick
and he can't breathe until he pounds a fist
into his gut and they pour out.

Pink tails, like worms, all covered in spit.
They keep tumbling out, all trying to
run, but they just keep knocking into
eachother. Screaming, little pink noses
sniffing the air, black eyes wide.

Jack tries to count them, but gives up,
and starts stomping. Tiny skulls crunching
under his boot, one...two...three and on.
One gets away and heads towards the water.
Jack lets him go. One or two always gets away.

He drives home
and gets some sleep.

La Vie Quotidienne

Amy King

I went there waiting for a version
of the Eiffel Tower neither of us had seen, one without you
on the tourist platform staring at wax figures of Edison
and his daughter inhabiting the top level glass vitrine.

Newer advancements might be called “renewable resources”
as the days keep turning into day,
never more than one we designed
for a false sense of accumulation in months, years, & lives.

We used to play on this lost street by a house
who’s roots drew ever closer to the surface,
until the grass had wooden knobbed veins pressing
through. In the heat of play, we fell over them regularly.

Speaking of, I’m glad the dogs aren’t loose on a day like today.
This Goya painting resembles carnival friends
running wild, yapping Brooklyn Ale, raping each other
with permission, hence the perils of war.

Moreover, these fancier dinners than I deserve add up after
so much curried shrimp, tilapia wrapped in banana leaves,
dredged truffles by the noses of trained beasts in private
warm to my insides and escape through various orifices.

Nature’s engines are in us too, we runners, we founders
of freedoms and horse enslavement. Alone, we remain
together in hermitage or after hours discussion.
But I’m here because I don’t need to be
at the end of this bar on the tip of this island under shade
of tropical growth I forget the name of—and the owner’s watchful eye.

Why has the pursuit of failure remained a maverick
in the slow dark, a bumping boat at the shores of China?
Some of us will take the steeple’s elevator, while others cling
to the ground floor. What comes now? None of us died
the very moment that so many of us are still alive.

Of Course, the Horses Regrettably

Laurel K. Dodge

Of course, the horses (regrettably)
screamed. An animal’s natural

reaction when trapped in flames.
But the cows, chewing cud

on their knees were (eerily) silent.
A barn owl flew out from the fire

like a god or devil. Mice streamed
from the crackling structure

like a river, flooding the field
with their bodies. The conflagration lit up

the night like candles on a cake. Happy
birth day to me. I opened my eyes.

I uttered my wish out loud. It only took
a single match and a lot of hay and dry

spell that lasted forever. The stars
that have always seemed too far

away were smoke-obliterated. Calm,
untouched and clean, the moon

hanging above it all, nodded. As I surveyed
the wet, smoldering beams, what anyone

else would label damage, I shielded
my eyes from the irrevocable brightness.

Tom Blessing



she crushes her last cigarette
into the heel of her boot
unties the boat from
the old post
the dock's wooden slates
creak in the light waves

the sun is setting
the aspen's long shadows
reach across choppy water

she could reach out
welcome their chill fingers
into her heart
but

it is time to fish
the oars squeal
in their uncoiled locks
as she dips them
with slow strokes
into the memories

in the aft
there is only
silence and
shadow



Venture Motel

Something for the Strippers

waiting for the taxi to
take them from the peeling motel
to the club out on 41

we all have these days
people we work with haloed
with stale breath
lipstick stained glasses
with ashes absorbing
the last of the cheap beer
fake teases and feet that
are cramped and sweaty

we all have these days
delusions of sunshine
behind the rain
vacant lots that bloom
with broken glass

we all have these days
life in the old motel
stains on the carpet
the toilet handle loose
the tissue dispenser empty
the grubbing hands of
young men with wives
and kiddies living their
own obscene lives
the empty laps
that rise and fall
the fiver down the g-string

we all have these days
today's, tomorrow's,
stale smoke
dirt streaked sky
it just goes on

Jack Anders

On the Distance of the Moon

The tree outside already stained with red.

My life was always
this uncertain.
That must have been why
I clung so hard to pleasures,
wherever I could find them,

pink toenail polish, a creamy
sense of opening,

throwing dandelion spheres
high into the gray air.

From excess
of touching, I have become distanced;

Midas touched what he turned to gold;

I touch what I see
as it nears me.

Hugely, the moon-ball,
silvery, resists

this definition.

Interregnum

The day eventually comes
when the poet dies from loneliness.
It's usually on a calm day, a Sunday
once the love interest of the poet's life has left.

A day like this is marked
by puffs of cottony exhaust
of cars warming up in parking lots

and panning shots of gray cities
at halftimes of professional sports.

It's not that the poet loses love:
No, he finds it in still closer things
than even his lost lover's face. For example
the silver moon like a dusty pancake,

dried lipstick on a forgotten tissue.
He can't help it: the enormous silence
in his apartment is like she paused while talking
and would be about to start again,

though in the meantime, he must wait forever.

Sky Burial

Jack Anders

Nashville reminds me of when I was young.
I guess, back then, I knew
I was trapped in the world of desire,
Samsara, the repeated passage of souls.
Oh but it felt so new to me,
sugar kisses betwixt the willows.
A girl's legs spread akimbo
in the blue cube of the swimming pool at night.
Then, repeated heartbreak, repetitive degradation,
most of which I guess I caused.
The blue jeans get white creases in them,
a white square at the butt for the wallet.
You learn about words like tattered, forlorn
with the Rolling Stones on the cheap transistor radio
washing dishes, closing up.
There's music in the club next door
but you're too poor to go.

At the restaurant in Nashville yesterday, two waiters, young guys
sit around with their slicked hair and white smocks
watching the passerby outside.
The ghost of Hank Williams Sr. stumbles, falls,
feels the cold blank grit of his brother the sidewalk
harsh and real against his cheek.
Think of all the dishwashers who worked here
dreaming of being stars like Johnny Cash.
But I stand outside, and I wouldn't even know it's Nashville
unless somebody told me it's just the same winter air
as everywhere this last day of February
A few skyscrapers, with their manic metal and glass.
I feel like crawling into a bottle
under a sink in a dirty bathroom
where a bass drum rattles through the walls
before a few desultory club-goers.

Let's face it, I'm just a ruffian, a scoundrel
who's destroyed half of what he's touched.
The voices of dead people crawl through my fingers,
a black-haired woman cries under a tree.
Johnny Cash sits in his cave west of Nashville,
sipping Jack Daniels and tuning his open chord soul
to the blood of the sunset.

How much I wanted to be here. How much I destroyed
what was here, simply in order to be here.
The vertigo of removal was almost like
the freshness of coming on something for the first time.
I wanted to know your name as if I'd never heard it before,
then lose it like I'd never know it again.

I ask you to bury me in a sky burial.
Strip the flesh off my bones with knives,
grind up the bones and feed them to vultures.
I want to be reincarnated as a bird
and do it
in a cruel way, a bitter way,
something that feels real,
something I can take right out of myself.

And now at long last I realize

And now at long last I realize
the places where you will be saved:
in the white flower of the magnolia, breaking
as it opens, shedding
petals to open;
in a brain stained the color
of all of the beers that it drinks,
unable to bless anything;
in the slow and shadowy sun
that falls across the horizon,
unable to cease its rising.
Why would I ever
want to say these things to you?
It would just push you further
back into your bar-stool. So,
I have learned to speak to the sky,
and listen to it.

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